

**BEMUSING
MAGAZINE**

2

MAY

5p



**reviews
NEWS
TALE-ENDERS
more**

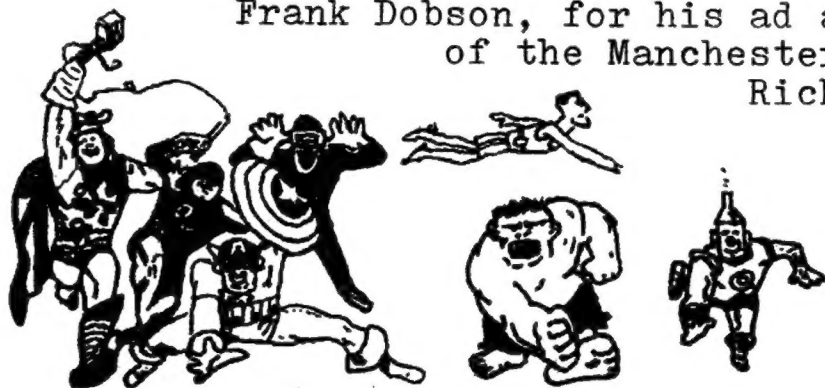


BEMUSINGS

Welcome back to the weird and wonderful world of the Magazine that Bemuses -- I hope that you will find your five pence well spent. On the following pages, you'll find an assortment of the latest reviews, pages of up-to-date news, and a generous helping of the genuine "Emlock Tale-Enders", plus some handsome fan art by Fantasy Unlimited artist "Superswipe". You've already seen his version of the Black Knight on the front cover, and he has taken over part of this page, too, with seven of Marvel's finest super-doers, in the Not Brand Echh style. Look out for Batman by Adams by Superswipe, and the Zombie lurching across page fifteen -- his drawings may not be completely original, but they brighten up a page rather nicely, I think.

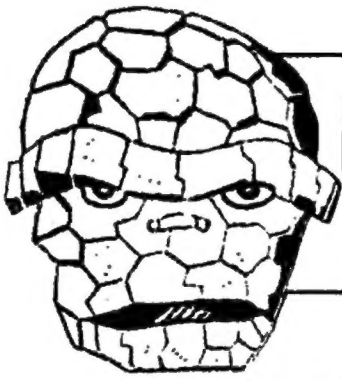
Bemusing Magazine No.2 is a trial issue, again -- I certainly hope that there will be a third issue in a few months, but that depends on your reactions to a professionally printed reviewzine -- with added news and comment. My thanks this time around go to Alan Austin, for his advertisements and the loan of Superswipe,

Frank Dobson, for his ad and taking charge of the sale of the Manchester Edition, plus Derek Stokes, Richard Burton--and everyone who forks out his shilling for a copy. Now, that's the sort of support Bem needs.



Martin

BEMUSING MAGAZINE is published by the editor, Martin Lock, Issue 2; third issue will (I hope) be on sale at the Autumn Comic Mart. Back issues: issue 1 is still available from the publisher at 5p, post free, while further copies of this issue can also be obtained for 9p, post free--please state whether Manchester or London edition is preferable. The sheet carrying pages 3,4,13,&14 differs between the two editions; the earlier, Manchester edition is identified as such on page 3. While they last, these alternative pages are available free--just send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the editorial address, stating which version is required. The reproductions of Marvel comics covers are copyright (c) 1974 by Marvel Comics Group, a Division of Cadence Industries Corp, and the reproductions of DC comics covers are copyright (c) 1974 by National Periodical Publications, Inc. Odd Bodkins is copyright (c) 1973 Chronicle Publishing Co. The contents of this magazine are copyright (c) 1974 by Martin Lock - no part of any issue of Bemusing Magazine can be reproduced without written permission. This is a non-profit-making magazine--now, how did that happen?



NEWS

SPECIAL FOR THE COMIC MART - THE LATEST NEWS ON MARVEL & DC COMICS, FANZINES, AND HAPPENINGS IN BRITAIN AND EUROPE.....

28 MARVEL TITLES TO BE IMPORTED AGAIN FROM AUGUST

Monthly:-	Bi-Monthly:-	
Captain America	(Starting August)	(Starting September)
Conan	Astonishing Tales	Amazing Adventures
Daredevil	Fear	Captain Marvel
Defenders	Ghost Rider	Creatures on the Loose
Fantastic Four	Iron Man	Frankenstein Monster
Man-Thing	Journey Into Mystery	Jungle Action
Marvel Team-Up	Powerman	Ka-Zar
Thor	Strange Tales	Marvel Spotlight
Tomb of Dracula	Weird Wonder Tales	Tomb of Darkness
Werewolf by Night	X-Men	Where Monsters Dwell

The Marvel comics return, with 19 titles per month, starting with August cover-dates and priced at 8p each - however, Hulk, Avengers, Spider-Man, and Dr Strange are excluded, plus the larger comics.

KUNG FU FIGHTS BACK!

"The Deadly Hands of Kung Fu" Marvel black & white magazine is to continue, but deadline problems mean that the latest issue does not have new Shang-Chi or Sons of the Tiger strips... Instead, in the end, Shang-Chi's origin, from Special Marvel Edition 15, had to be reprinted. The features in the middle, however, are original.

MORE MARVEL REPRINT BOOKS COMING OUT

Monsters on the Prowl is back on the schedules after missing six months, with the June issue, number 28. Also, War Is Hell returns, with issue 7 (June) taking up the Sergeant Fury reprint series that was in Special Marvel Edition before Master of Kung Fu took over.

BITS OF BLACK & WHITE BUSINESS

"Planet of the Apes" is now definitely on the black & white roster at Marvel, with Doug Moench as scripter and Mike Ploog as artist, plus lots of ape-oriented features. If copyright difficulties are overcome, GODZILLA may also have a magazine to star in.

"The Savage Sword of Conan" will take over the b & w adventures of the stalwart Cimmerian; another hero who was in Savage Tales No.1, Ka-Zar, will take over the lead spot in that magazine.

Remember Howard the Duck from Man-Thing 1? He will star in an 8-page story, illustrated by Neal Adams, in one of the b&ws shortly.

Brother Voodoo, evicted from Strange Tales by the Golem, will be appearing regularly in Tales of the Zombie from issue 6.

(continued overleaf...)

MARVEL TEAM-UPS...

The June issue (22) of Marvel Team-Up features Spidey and Hawkeye; in future, Spider-Man will appear only in alternate issues -- July brings Human Torch and Ice-Man together.

...AND NEW SERIES

"Deathlok The Human Killing Machine" takes over Astonishing Tales in August, the first new issue to be imported, with "A Cold Knight's Frenzy" - will this new SF title make it? Another new name is Tigra the Were-Woman, originally scheduled for Giant-Size Creatures No.1.

SPANISH INTERNATIONAL COMICS COMPETITION AND CONVENTION

The second "Feria de Publicaciones y Comics" is to take place from 24th to 30th June, in Gijon, with celebrities from many countries. If you're on holiday in Spain then, it should be well worth a visit --and there's a competition, too, closing date June 1, for amateurs and professionals to produce a Spanish-language children's comic of 14 (pro) or 6 (amateur) pages, plus cover; send me an s.a.e. for fuller details. The top prize is 60,000 pesetas, plus a trophy.

BRITISH FANZINES - ALAN AUSTIN STRIKES AGAIN!

Due to appear in a month or so from Fantasy Unlimited's editor is a Golden Age fanzine, dealing with comics and pulps from the 30s & 40s - he is still in need of contributions, so this is your chance.

DC HUNDRED-PAGERS -- STEADY AT SEVEN PER MONTH

This is the list of regular bi-monthly 100-pagers:- Shazam, Worlds Finest, Superman Family, Brave & Bold, Batman, Detective, House of Mystery, Justice League, Unexpected, Tarzan, Young Romance, & Young Love. The monthly rotating 100-pager continues, with Wonder Woman & Action added to the group. The August Batman features the return of the Penguin; the September Brave & Bold teams Batman and Aquaman.

ARTIST AND EDITOR CHANGES AT DC - THE WINNERS AND THE LOSERS

With Archie Goodwin leaving DC for Warren, Jack Kirby takes over Cur Fighting Forces, which must make the future of the Losers seem rather uncertain; his other new books are OMAC (One-Man-Army-Corps) and The Dingbats. Julie Schwartz takes back Detective, leaving his pet project, Strange Sports Stories, which is cancelled. Following Swamp Thing 10, Nestor Redondo takes over the art; the tale in No. 11 is called "The Conqueror Worms". Tony DeZuniga has left DC. The \$1.00 books are to appear once a month, with Golden Age reprints & the character books alternating.

WONDER WOMAN TV FILM SET TO BECOME A SERIES IN THE AUTUMN

A strange show - Cathy Lee Crosby doesn't wear the famous costume, Steve Trevor and the magic lasso appear, and she works at the U.N.

COMING COMIC CONVENTIONS IN THE SOUTH

EMSWORTH - May 25th. (In Hampshire; best reached by British Rail)
LONDON - July 20th & 21st, *Summer Special*

THANKS for much of the above news go to Richard Burton (Editor of Britain's biggest & Best newszine, Comic Media News, available from Rob Barrow, and Alan Austin.

Review Section

REVIEW: LIMITED COLLECTORS' EDITION C-25 -- THE BATMAN

CONTENTS: "The Case of the Joker's Crime Circus" by Bob Kane (1941)
"The Case Batman Failed to Solve" by Jerry Robinson (1942)
"The Mayors of Yonville" by Dick Sprang (1944)
"Hate of the Hooded Hangman" by Carmine Infantino (1966)
"Hot Time in Gotham Town Tonight" by Irv Novick (1970)
"Ghost of the Killer Skies" by Neal Adams (1970)

The format of these DC dollar editions can make almost anything look good - the 10" by 13½" page size



shows the art to its best advantage, so that this is the fourth success in a row for this series - leaving aside the Rudolph the



Red-Nosed Reindeer books.

Shazam was golden age material, then Tarzan and House of Mystery both used more recent, sixties and seventies, makings... and now this book is half of each type, divided by a double-size central poster of an Adams-style Batman in mid-air.

The golden age half was nicely chosen by editor Bridwell. Bob Kane had to be represented, of course - after all, he did create the Gotham Goliath (or, as he's called on page 10, the Dark Knight; a good name, that, rather better than corny old Caped Crusader) and the story and art are suitably dynamic. The second story is one that was re-told any number of times in the following twenty years; but never as well as on its first outing, while "The Mayors of Yonville", featuring rotund rogues Tweedledum and Tweedledee, is simply great fun.

"Side Two" begins with the token Infantino piece, written by John Broome, followed by an excellent eight-pager scripted by young Mike Friedrich, inked by Dick Giordano, and pencilled by the veteran Irv Novick, putting a new light on The Batman and his role in Gotham. And then - the longest story, fifteen pages of Neal Adams, assisted by writer O'Neil and inker Giordano, a tribute to Enemy Ace and the men who created him, Kubert and Kanigher... Nice.

There are the usual features, too, but with the emphasis on not Bob Kane or Neal Adams, but Carmine Infantino - two of his villain posters, "How to Draw Batman", and contents page illos, plus photos of the TV show regulars, and the back-cover diorama. In all, with the Adams cover, a good addition to anyone's collection



THE COLLECTIVE UNCONSCIENCE OF ODD BODKINS
By Dan O'Neill (Glide Publications, San Francisco,
1973--112pp, 9"x12"; \$3.95. Available in the U.K.
from Compendium at £1.80)

In Comic Media 10, I reviewed the first "Odd Bodkins" book, and recommended it most highly; so I was very glad to find this second volume, which continues and concludes the odyssey of Fred, the man-sized, cynical bird, and his friend Hugh. I enjoyed reading this book almost as much as the first volume, and had great difficulty in choosing a good sample to reproduce on this page - there were just too many marvellous strips in the first twenty or so pages.

However, after the first portion of the book, instead of the almost complete daily segments - Odd Bodkins was a syndicated comic strip - we start getting a continued story, with occasional asides, and this tends to reduce the fun. One of Walt Disney's early strip characters, Bucky Bug, starts to appear in independent episodes - and his strips are rather joyless. Meanwhile, Hugh and Fred have encountered the sneaky motorbike Norton, analysed the insecure werechicken, found a lesser hoo-hoo hiding in a tree, seen the fat Gross National Product... And then the continued story really takes over. We discover that petrol-rich smog is a Martian plot to make the atmosphere right for invasion, and soon, by feeding Norton a magic cookie, Fred and Hugh, with a western-type ghost called O'Brady, reach Mars, a type of hippy commune - and are killed by a dinosaur, and - excuse me - go to hell, where a Disney-style Pluto rules, aided by Virgo Rat, who looks strangely like Mickey Mouse. After a time, they escape, but, with another twenty pages left to the book, O'Neill loses interest in them, and they disappear, with Bucky Bug and other right-wing Disney characters taking over.

This book, then, is not quite as fine a work as its predecessor which was not only a collection of marvellous individual episodes, but one continuing story. Instead, this, due to editing, is each in turn; still very good most of the way, and, with only minor reservations, recommended to everyone who appreciates the small sample reproduced below.



BIGGER is BETTER?

I've got five of the latest DC 100-pagers to look at, here - the April Batman (255), the May House of Mystery (224), Wonder Woman (211), and Detective (440), and the June J.L.A.(111). What sort of packages are they? Well, going by the American prices, they are no special bargain--three 20-cent DC books have 60 pages of new story altogether, but a 100-pager costing the same only offers 20 pages of new material, plus 60 pages of reprints. So, only if you value 60 pages of old stories above 40 pages of new will you prefer the Super-Spectaculars, and many comics fans are likely to find that they already have some of the reprints.

Of the five books, only three have got Golden Age material; Detective has Simon & Kirby's Manhunter, Doll Man, and Green Lantern, Batman has "The Duped Domestics" by Jerry Robinson, and J.L.A. has a Seven Soldiers of Victory yarn, or at least the first 33 pages of it. There is even less fifties material, except in Wonder Woman, where we suffer through four stories from that period; even the early sixties are neglected, in favour of stories from 1964 on--we get an average of 21 pages per mag of this comparatively recent material; more in Batman and Detective, none in the last Kanigher issue of Wonder Woman. New stories we get 20 pages per book - except for House of Mystery, where we get a Nino story from the Weird War inventory, and a Talaoc 7-pager to bring us up to 35 pages of new material - presumably to stop the reader from noticing that 25 pages are six years old or less. Most of the new stories we get are up to standard, particularly the 20-page Batman story by Adams - but, to get them, a lot of people are being forced to buy a parcel of reprints they may not want.

DC admit that the reprints in some of the 100-pagers were thrown together in a hurry to start off with; however, the amount of 40s material should soon increase, and, while they last, we are to get a good amount of vintage material by Toth, Kirby, Kubert, and the better Batman artists, so the collector will have a few treats in store. If the 100-pagers sell well--reaching half the circulation of the 36-pagers, say--then DC may expand the space for new story enough to compensate for the down-grading of many titles from 12 to six appearances a year; perhaps all the DC comics may go to 100 pages before long. But will bigger mean better? Let us hope so.



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BOTH OLD AND NEW COLLECTORS.



THE CRYPT-KEEPER

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Emlock Tale-Enders

There's a mixture of May and June Marvel titles to look at, this time around --and most of them offer us only 18 pages of story and art for our 25 cents. But that's what inflation is doing to us - and most of the books are well up to standard, anyway. For example, MARVEL SPOTLIGHT 15 has Jim Mooney on both pencils and inks, hordes of demons, and a properly nightmarish script in the Steve Gerber style. Even if some of the devils are curiously reminiscent of some of Supergirl's beaus from Mooney's 1960s work, it's still an interesting series. We do get short-changed, though, in issue 24 of AMAZING ADVENTURES, as, for the third time in succession, an old 4-page reprint fills out the mag --only 15 pages of the new tale, Marvel's version of Kamandi for grown-ups. In case 4 months was too big a time to keep a current Black Panther yarn in our minds--JUNGLE ACTION like The Defenders was delayed by the paper shortage for a while-- ish 9 has as an illustrated 4-page backup feature a recap of the plot threads of the previous 3 issues, while the lead story, illustrated by Gil Kane, spotlights Baron Macabre & his Denizens of Death as the Panther's latest enemies. And while we are on the subject of Gil Kane, what about MARVEL PREMIERE 15, with the origin of Iron Fist? As you can see, the cover is a good one-- but it really has not very much to do with the actual story, which takes place high up an Asian mountain. I've done a detailed review of it for Comic Mart Magazine - for now, all I can say is that Iron Fist makes a very promising debut. But let's move on to June, now, with Hulk 176, where we discover that counter-earth too has its own problems--the president they're out to impeach is the Man-Beast! At



(continued on second page following...



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MORE

TALE-ENDERS

the end of the story, Adam Warlock is freed from the stasis chamber he had been trapped in, ready for his final acts next issue. A second June issue not to miss is Daredevil 110 - it has Gene Colan back on the art for one more time. DD's back in New York, Foggy Nelson is on hand - more we should ask for? TOMB OF DRACULA 21 was also drawn by Colan, as usual, and contains the last part of the untypically(for this title) action-oriented 3-parter. And IRON MAN 68 features--are you ready for this?--the shocking secret of old Shell-Head's new mask. Sheesh!

And DC? The June issue of what the cover calls "Weird Adventure Comics" continues to show a ruthless Spectre hunting down and killing vicious criminals; this time, one is buried alive in a cemetery, and another is turned to glass and then smashed - mild treatment, by the standards of the new Spectre. The back-up feature is a happy ending for the "Captain Fear" series by Nino. FLASH 227 (June) features another captain--an old foe from Flash's Rogue Gallery, Captain Boomerang, while the GL story has Dick Dillin as artist, and Neal Adams he is not; O'Neil's script still builds nicely to its cliffhanger, though. SUPERMAN 275 (May) has a tale of E.S.P. and the filming of a movie called "Enter the Dragonfly" - truly! - while the "Fabulous World of Krypton" bit is a bed-time story of that world. WITCHING HOUR 42 (May) has got a Bernard Baily story--he's been drawing comics at least 36 years, as a look at the contents of the Action No.1 reprint will show -- plus Rubeny and Frank Redondo. The stories are fairly good, except that two of them drag midnight into the final pages -- which is not, one might say, completely... Unexpected. PLOP! 5 (June), with 36 pages of weird humour for 20 cents, is quite a bargain, especially with a new six-page Wrightson story about a sculptor who can bring to life his creations. Fans of Superman take note--Murphy Anderson gives us a six-frame adventure of the Man of Steel, in which Lois finally learns his secret identity... But not for long! And there's a Mike Sekowsky 3-pager, which looks as if at least seven other DC mystery books had already rejected it, and an Aragones story about a bird-man... All this, and the Easter Bunny too!

Let's finish with a quick look at the Skywald "Horror-Mood", which now runs to four magazines, plus annuals and winter specials. Issue 18 (April) of NIGHTMARE features artists Cesar, Suso, Jesus Duran, Ricardo Villamonte, Collado, and Emilio -- which shows that Skywald rely on foreign artists as much as anyone else. Some of the art is quite good, and the stories are up to standard, especially in the final piece, "The Thing in the Space", a weird retelling of Alice in Wonderland - or is it?

-ML





LONDON TALE-ENDERS...LATE LONDON TALE-ENDERS...

This page was to have featured "SEEN & READ", with short reviews of ZARDOZ (an interesting film), the EUROPEAN CARTOONIST 1 (an expensive, well-produced Italian fanzine in English), GANGLAND'S DOOM (a fan publication, 64 pages, about the Shadow) & more... But, along came this new batch of extra-new comics to review, so away we go. Next time, maybe?

The later-arriving June Marvels include Dr. Strange No.1 (pictured on the cover) with a weird re-telling of Alice in Wonderland - now, where have I heard that before? The art's better than ever. STRANGE TALES 174 presents the first Jewish Monster-Hero, "The Golem", with John Buscema artwork and suitably uncanny happenings. SPIDERMAN 133 features the death of -- no, don't worry, it's only the Molten Man, getting all burnt up about something. MASTER OF KUNG FU 18 has lots of little panels, but it is not Starlin artwork, it is Paul Gulacy; and Steve Englehart will soon leave the scripting - handing over to Merry Gerry Conway. Oh well. ASTONISHING TALES 24 is our last sight of "It!", with the chinese "Fin Fang Foom" coming on like a Kung Fu expert--good riddance, I say. KULL 14 has some over-simple art from Mike Ploog, plus a 3-page Joe Maneely reprint. Hints are dropped that issue 15 may see Kull's death, as the book folds.

With the July issue (212), WONDER WOMAN moves over to the capable hands of Julie Schwartz, who has given Len Wein the job of sorting out the horrible mess that Robert Kanigher's ghastly editing job got the title into; it's a promising re-start, with Curt Swan art. The June SHAZAM (12) has a 38-page reprint of the Marvel and Sivana Families battling to the finish, from 1947. The rest of the issue's not much good, even with Dick Giordano drawing Captain Marvel Jr's story. BRAVE & BOLD 113 (July) teams The Batman with the Metal Men yet again, with Aparo art. Kubert fans will want this issue, as it reprints his 1960 origin of Hawkman, and a 1959 Viking Prince yarn; 37 pages of Kubert, in all. And HOUSE OF MYSTERY 225 (july) has 31 pages of brand-new material, drawn by Alcalá, Thorne, Nino, & Cruz, plus a 25-page left-over gothic novel by Heck - that's a good deal.

FANZINES RECEIVED DEPARTMENT

"A Short Stop at the Transylvanian Brain Surgery" No.2, April 1974, 20p; subscriptions 60p for 3 issues, £1.20 for 6 issues, from Peter Barnett.

This is a much more professional issue than TBS 1, which came out last December. Now with a page size of 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ "x11", and improved art - 2 excellent pages by Paul Hudson on Lord of the Rings, for example - and a wider variety of features, including 4 pages of letters, we have a magazine that, if it appears regularly, has the potential to join the top rank of British fanzines. The editors have 500 copies of this issue to sell; since Bem-2 is only aiming at half as large a circulation, I salute their courage, and look forward to issue 3.

Any other fanzines need reviewing? I just love free copies...

REVIEW: TALES OF THE ZOMBIE No.5
(May, 1974) 75 cents

Contents: "Palace of Black Magic"
by Steve Gerber & Pablo Marcos
"Voodoo War"
by Tony Isabella, Syd Shores,
Dick Ayers, & Mike Esposito
"Death's Bleak Birth"
by Doug Moench & Frank Springer
"Who Walks With a Zombie"
reprint, art by Russ Heath



Another dull, gloomy cover, showing the Zombie himself rising out of his grave to get hold of a passing girl, hides an above-average reprint, with art by Russ Heath, non-series stories by Isabella (a grimly moral tale of a voodoo feud in the Wild West) and Moench (a "scientific" way to raise the dead, if you don't mind one little snag--the resurrector always dies), plus a letters page, a film review ("White Zombie"), text fiction by Chris Claremont, a recap on the career of Brother Voodoo, and--the best part--a 22-page story of Simon Garth, the Zombie, by the best regular team in the black & white magazines, Gerber and Marcos.

The story starts with Phillip Bliss, who in the previous issue used you, the Zombie (that's the way Gerber writes 'em, and who am I to disagree) to even his score with lawyers, giving you a gift--the present you want most--a grave. However, he keeps the amulet of Damballah, which controls you, and, when thugs steal it, you're called back from your rest. The thugs take the amulet to Mr. Six, their boss--and are paid off in bullets. Meanwhile, you're walking along the freeway into town--distracted, by the small part of you that is still Simon Garth, by the sight of the factory you used to own. After this, you walk on towards the amulet--which Mr. Six has now given to his master, Voodoo priest Papa Shorty, born legless, yet able to hover in mid-air by his mastery of the black arts. You arrive, and, in Papa's power, kill a man. Phil Bliss arrives, to save you--but Papa says "Kill him!", Papa has the amulet, and you obey...and Papa laughs--and drops the amulet, severing his control over you. As you lift him over your head, he realises you are more than an ordinary, will-less Zombie; you have your own drives, and you can recognise evil. You throw him at the snake-altar, breaking both beyond repair, then over-turn the flaming brazier, your hands unaware of the terrible heat; and then you walk away, leaving the Palace of Black Magic burning to destruction...

A strong story, then, nicely put together by Steve Gerber, with some very good work by Pablo Marcos, Marvel's best black & white artist. Now, if only they'd let him do the covers as well...

Action 1

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CHUCK DAWSON by H. Fleming b&w (6pp)
ZATARA by Fred Guardineer (12pp)
South Sea Strategy text (2pp)
Sticky-Mitt Stimson by Alger (4pp)
Marco Polo by Sven Elven (4pp)
PEP MORGAN by Fred Guardineer (4pp)
SCOOP SCANLON by Will Ely b&w (6pp)
TEX THOMSON by Bernard Baily (12pp)

A cowboy, a "Master Magician" in the mold of Mandrake, the first half of a text story dealing with blood-thirsty South Sea island natives, a comic thief, the Adventures of Marco Polo, a boxer, a "Five Star" reporter, a world-travelling Texan, plus a page of new film-star gossip and a page of sporting personalities -- all this, and the startling adventures of the most sensational strip character of all time too! The comic buyer of June 1938 certainly got a lot of variety for his ten cents.

And today, it's a bargain at ten times the price, in what DC are calling "our majestic new size" -- and, judging by the page in the March, 1973 issue of SECRET ORIGINS, which is duplicated here, the doubling of the page area really does show the artwork to its best advantage. The actual Superman story - if you've got the Superman book that Spring Books put out in 1972, the story, except for the origin page, is on pp26-37, and the conclusion, from Action 2, is on pp38-50 - is surprisingly dynamic for the period. The Man of Tomorrow gets a reprieve for a wrongly convicted man, punishes a wife-beater, dates Lois, saves her from mobsters, and foils a plot to corrupt a senator--and the other stories are not bad, either!

COVER GALLERY

